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THE SPINE CHILLER COLLECTION

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Reading's never been so
SCARY!

LM1.25 Malta



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The Shark and his crew terrorised the small village. They took food and supplies whenever they wanted and didn't hesitate to cruelly end the lives of anybody who got in the way.

Treager stationed men in the village at all times. When he returned from the sea and wished to come ashore, he would ring a bell on his ship. Unless he heard a similar bell rung by one of the pirates ashore, signalling danger, he knew it was safe.

Nowadays, the Festival of the Pirates was held annually, in memory of the night The Shark was finally captured and executed. For an entire week, the townspeople would do their best to turn Wright's Cove back into the eighteenth-century seafarers' village it had once been. The event drew tourists from far and wide, so local business people were always anxious to co-operate.

On the final day everyone wore masks and costumes and, in a special pageant in the town square, students re-enacted the capture itself.



According to historical record, Treager's reign of terror had come to an end when a brave young fisherman, Jeremiah Wright, rallied the townspeople to action. They captured the alarm bell and all The Shark's men on land. So, when Treager's ship sailed into the harbour, there was no one to ring the warning bell.

The unsuspecting pirates left their ship and came ashore, where they were

ambushed and finally captured. At midnight, the bloodthirsty thugs were forced to pay for their crimes by leaping off the bluff that jutted out over the harbour. The sea-swept rocks below proved fatal to each of the villains, as well as to Treager himself.

Legend had it that before The Shark had been pushed off the edge to his doom, he'd turned his evil gaze on the gathered people of the town and roared, "I will have my revenge! You have decided your own end. The sea cannot hold me nor will it save you from your fate!"

But Jeremiah Wright stood boldly before the pirate and lifted the brass bell whose silence had lured him to his doom.

"As long as this bell sounds to mark your death,"

he shouted above the howl of the wind, "you can never return to land. The sea will forever be your grave!" With that, Treager was driven over the edge, his screams lost in the great crashing sounds of the waves pounding on the rocks below.

Two hundred years later, few people actually believed that the dramatic account of Treager's demise was true, but the bell would always be rung at midnight at the height of the festivities.

"So, are you crushed because you're not going to be in the pirate pageant?"

Mike asked Peter sarcastically as he sat next to him in the lunchroom.

"I don't know if I can live through it,"

Peter shot back in a voice every bit as sarcastic and loud enough to be heard by two

other friends, Adam and Kyle, who were walking up to join them. "You are going to dress up, aren't you?" Kyle asked, sitting down.

"Sure!" Peter answered "That part of it is fun. I just wish they'd do something different once in a while. I mean, every year it's the same old thing."

Adam nodded in agreement. "Yeah, my dad says that if Mayor Gates gives the same speech he always does before ringing the bell, he's going to start a campaign to throw him out of office."

Kyle laughed. "Nothing could get him to change that speech. He's been giving it for the past six years. I don't see why it's such a big deal anyway. Nobody really believes the story."

"What do you mean?" Peter said in surprise. "Of course it's true. There are loads of stories about Treager and Wright's Cove in the history books."

"Yeah, that part's true," Kyle admitted. "But I meant the stuff about the bell. I bet that after the pirates were snuffed, some wiseguy just made up the rest of it because it sounded good and might make people come to Wright's Cove to see the famous bell. You know what I think would happen if nobody bothered to ring it at the end of the pageant?"

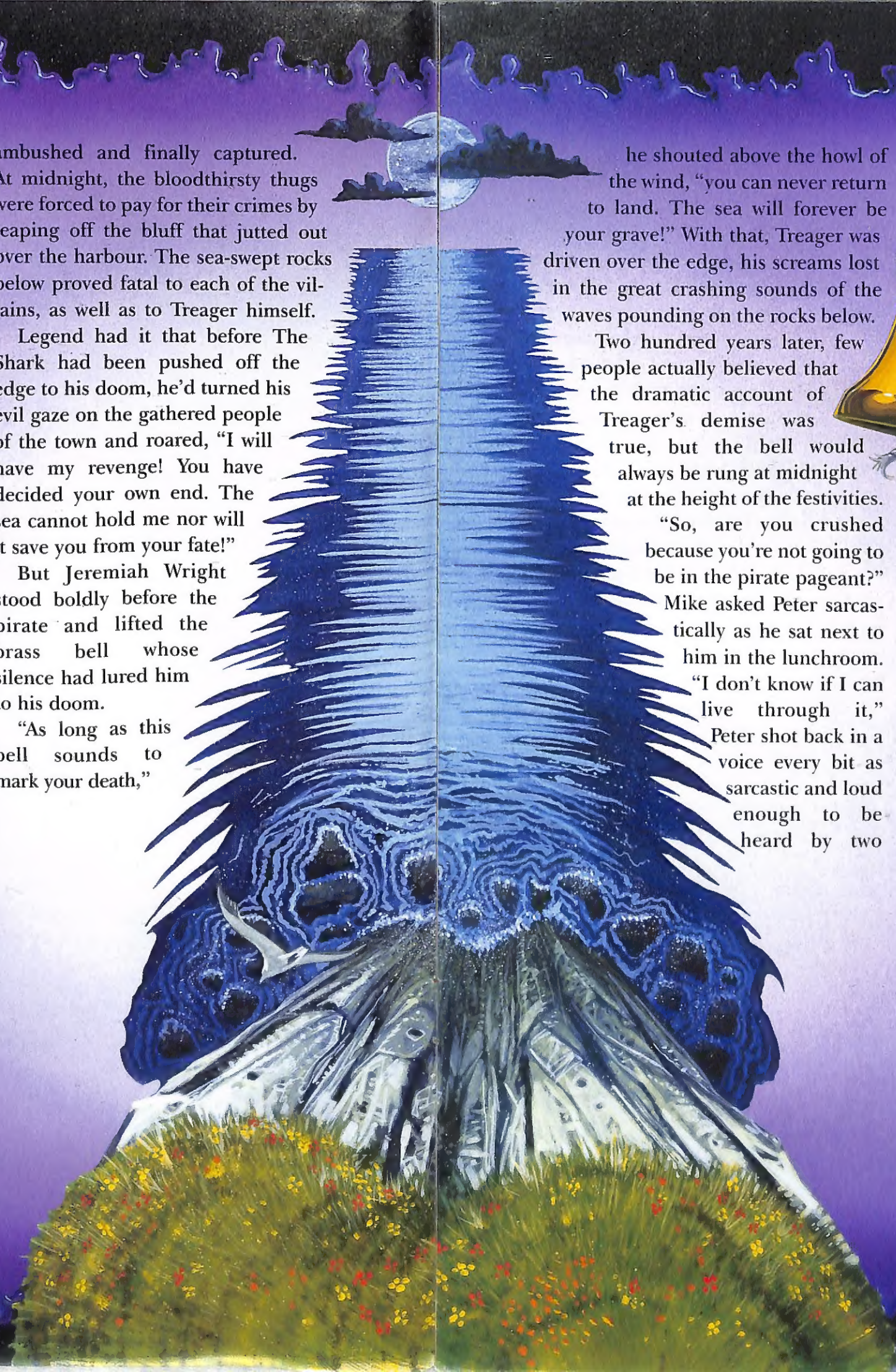
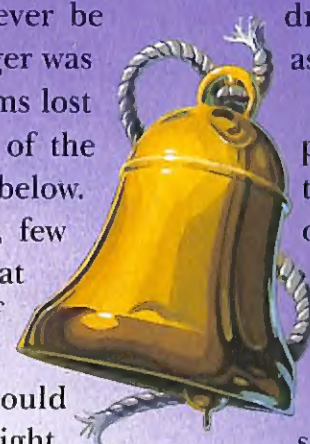
No one said a single word.

"That's it. Exactly," Kyle said with a smirk. "Nothing would happen at all."

"Except," said Peter with a mischievous grin, "Mayor Gates would have kittens!"

Mike grinned. "Now that's something that I really *would* like to see!"

"Me, too. It would really freak out a few other people as well!" Peter mused.



"You know, that gives me an idea." He motioned for his friends to come closer, and lowered his voice. "What if we make sure the bell doesn't ring by hiding it?"

"Right," said Mike with a smile. "So how do we walk up in front of hundreds of people and swipe it? In any case, it stays locked up in the museum until the end of the pageant."

"Yes, he's right," agreed Peter. "But my mum has a set of keys to the museum, and it just so happens that I know where she keeps them. She'd never notice if I borrowed them. Besides, we could get the bell and put the keys back before anyone even noticed they were missing."

Adam frowned. "But how would we get the bell out of there without anybody seeing us, and what would we do with it?"

"Everybody will be at the pageant," Peter answered, confidently. "And we have a whole week to work out exactly what we're going to do with it. Let's start now."



By the time the day of the pageant arrived, everyone in Wright's Cove was well and truly into the spirit of the festival, wearing striped T-shirts, colourful headscarves and other pirate garb. In fact, Mr. Wojenski at the emporium had completely run out of black eye patches and plastic hand-hooks.

With his mum's keys, it had been easy for Peter and his friends to get into the museum through the back entrance.

"See!" said Peter, triumphantly. "Just as I said. Everyone is at the pageant."

They had carefully worked out every step of the plan. Adam kept watch while Peter lifted the eight-inch-high brass bell from its display case. Holding the clapper to keep it silent, he placed their booty in the red, velvet-lined wooden chest in which it was kept when not on display. Then he snapped down the lock. The chest was about the size of a small suitcase, but it had a sturdy metal handle on each side.

"It's much heavier than I thought it would be," Mike complained as he and Kyle each gripped a handle.

"It's all clear back here," whispered Adam. "Let's get a move on!"

The four slipped out quickly and headed towards the beach. There was a small cave where the bluff slanted down to meet the sea. The cave was above the waterline at all times, and the entrance was easy to reach at low tide. Peter had checked the tide tables and had decided the cave would make a perfect hiding place for the bell.

"Hey," Mike called to Peter as they trudged across the sand of the darkened beach. "Can we stop for a minute? This chest just gets heavier and heavier!"

Peter glanced at his luminous watch dial. It was twenty minutes to midnight. They had plenty of time to stash the bell and get back to town before anyone noticed it was missing.

"OK," he agreed, flopping on to the sand. Peter looked round and shivered. In the pale light of the moon, the shoreline looked eerie and unreal. Turning slightly, he could see the bright lights behind them. The sounds of the festivities drifted down the hill, but the town seemed miles away.

Before him, a thin line of foaming waves marked where the ocean met the shore. But beyond that there was... what? Peter felt a strange surge of fear. What if the story were really true...? What if...? He shook the thought away and glanced at the others. Everyone was very quiet, probably having just the same thoughts as Peter.

Minutes later, Kyle whispered, "Pete, you don't believe... er... that people really can come back from the dead, do you?"

"No way!" Peter answered firmly, but

he was suddenly very aware of how alone they were on the desolate beach. "But we'd better just get this over with," he added, looking down at his watch.

Then his eyes widened as he realised that it still said twenty to midnight! He slapped the dial, but the numbers remained the same. "Oh, no. I don't believe it. My watch has..." But he trailed off to hear Adam gasping and pointing towards the sea.

"Look over there!" cried Adam, his voice filled with horror. "What are they?"

Several dark shapes seemed to be bobbing in the water about a hundred feet offshore. The boys stared in disbelief as more of the shapes came into view. They were people, or something like people, wading through the surf and heading for the shore.



"Over there!" Kyle cried. "There's more!" Peter looked in the direction of Kyle's gaze. Five more shadowy figures were slogging steadily through the waves and foam and on to the beach.

"And there, too!" Mike gestured wildly to the other side. "It's them, isn't it? We were wrong. The pirates *have* come back!"

"The bell!" Peter moaned. "We've got to ring the bell!" He dropped to his knees in the sand and fumbled with the chest.

"It's locked!" he cried out. "It must have locked automatically when I closed the lid. We have to get it open somehow!"

"Not me!" Kyle shouted. "I'm off!"



He started to run clumsily through the sand, with Adam lurching after him. They had only gone a few dozen yards when two wraith-like figures emerged from the shadows of the cliff. Their skin shimmered with a greenish glow, their eyes blazed as red as blood, and the air grew thick and heavy with the foul smell of what they were – rotting things which had spent too long beneath the sea. Reaching out with their long, taloned fingers, the phantoms gripped the two terrified boys and dragged them back into the shadow of the cliff.

"Kyle! Adam!" Mike screamed out.

"It's too late!" Peter gasped. "We can't help them! We've got to get back to town and tell everyone what's happening!"

Wiping away tears with the back of his shaking hand, he tasted sand and salt... and fear. It was so overpowering that he

could barely draw a breath, but he forced himself to move. Grabbing one handle of the chest, he yelled to Mike to lift up the other side.

"We can make it up the hill," he shouted. "We must return the bell!"

Mike grabbed the other handle, and they began to struggle through the sand with the heavy chest. Peter stole a glance over his shoulder and saw that at least ten of the hideous spectres were moving slowly up the beach.

"Keep going!" Peter cried. Slipping and sliding, the boys reached the gravel path and started to climb up it.

Every breath burned as Peter fought to keep his balance. They were nearly

halfway up when he felt his feet slide from beneath him. Falling heavily, he cried out as the loose stones and pebbles of the path scraped across the flesh of his face. Then the handle of the

chest slipped from his grasp. With all the weight suddenly upon him, Mike teetered at the edge of the path for a split second. Then, with a scream of terror, he toppled over and slid down the embankment. A shadowy figure below lunged towards him, and Mike's screams ceased.

Peter scrambled upright.

The bell was gone, but he could still warn everyone of the terrible doom which approached.

Ignoring the sharp pain in his side, he began to run again. As the trail flattened out, the yelling and whooping of the townsfolk grew louder. They're still on the bluff, he thought, turning in that direction.

Suddenly Peter saw someone ahead of him. He blinked away the dirt and tears and recognized the gaudy pirate costume and familiar mask which was worn by Mayor Gates every year without fail. With a last burst of effort, Peter raced toward him.

"Mayor Gates!" he gasped. "The pirates... the story's all true! They've come back, just as Treager threatened! We've got to warn everyone before they get here!"

Peter stopped. Mayor Gates was laughing. "I'm not joking, Mayor!" he shouted, fear mixing with anger and frustration. "It's all true, and soon the pirates will be here! They are climbing up the bluff right now!"

Slowly, the tall man gripped his mask and lowered it inch by inch. "You are wrong about that last part, my lad," he hissed evilly. "We are already here."

In horror, Peter realized that the cries coming from the bluff were the townsfolk's shrieks of terror... and that he was now gazing into the cold, soulless eyes of James 'The Shark' Treager.

"Come along, my boy," the phantom commanded, clutching Peter in his icy grip. "The time has come for *my* version of the final act."

THE END



OUR HAUNTED WORLD

South America has many mysteries which have yet to be explained...

THUNDERBIRDS ARE STILL GO!

Giant birds with long, teeth-filled beaks, leathery featherless skin and a mind-bending 6-metre wingspan are often reported in Chile as well as other South American countries. The beating of their wings is said to be so loud that it sounds like thunder, which is how the creatures got their name. Witnesses describe the thunderbird as looking like a prehistoric bird and point to book illustrations of pterosaurs – said to have become extinct 65 million years ago! But there are so many wild, jungle-covered parts of South America that almost anything could live there and escape detection!

► The ancient megalithic wall at Sacsayhuaman, Peru, is the strongest, most earthquake-resistant structure in the world!



Bloodsuckers!

This vampire bat from South America sucks blood from sleeping animals. It has given rise to stories of vampires – dead people that return from the grave as monstrous bats and suck the blood of others, turning them into vampires, too!

MEGA-MYSTERY

Many of the ancient, megalithic cities in South America use enormous, carved stones as building blocks. Their irregular shapes withstand earthquakes and they weigh up to 200 tonnes! No mortar is used to hold them together, but you can't slide a piece of paper between the stones. No one knows how the ancient builders carved and fitted the stones so perfectly.

A plant juice which turns stone soft could be the answer. A jar of liquid found in an old tomb was spilt on a rock. Explorer Colonel Fawcett said, "It was as if the stone had melted, like heated wax."

In 1911, a Peruvian explorer told of a man whose metal spurs had corroded away during a long jungle walk through red, fleshy-leaved plants. Locals said the plants were used to shape and fit the stones!

WELL, STRIKE A LIGHT!

Stories of a great lost South American city, built by unknown people, have kept explorers excited for centuries. Its rooms were said to have had permanent lighting created by 'captured stars' or crystals! Once dismissed by many as being an impossible thing for an ancient race to have achieved, we now know how it could have been done!

Scientists have grown crystals of quartz containing phosphorus. This crystal absorbs daylight, then gives out its stored light at night, like a storage battery. A light like this could shine like a beacon for years!



A SNAKY STORY

A friend of a friend booked a trip to the Amazon rainforest...

1 Before he left, David visited his doctor to get some vaccinations. The doc warned him not to swim in the Amazon river under any circumstances!



2 Before long, he was in Brazil, meeting the other members of the group and their local guide.

3 Next morning, David got his first real taste of the rainforest! The hum of insects and noises from unseen birds and animals filled the air.

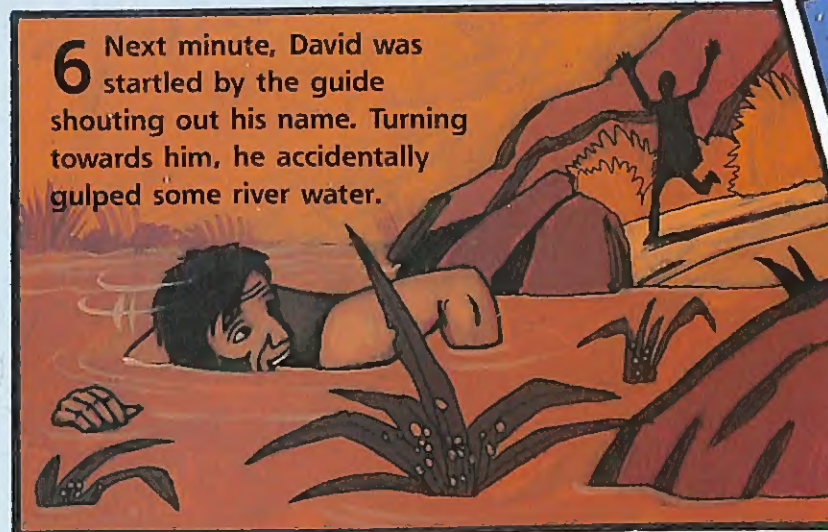


4 After days of trekking, the group reached the shore of the great river. Their small hotel stood silhouetted on the river bank.



5 As everyone went inside, David took off his boots and dived into the shallows of the cool river for a swim.

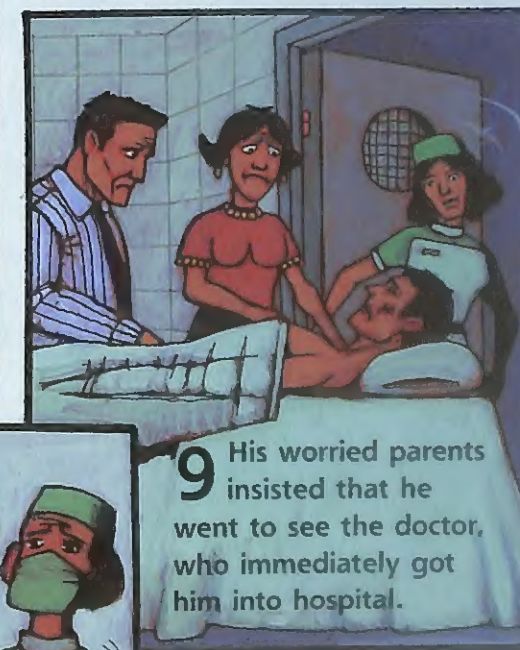
6 Next minute, David was startled by the guide shouting out his name. Turning towards him, he accidentally gulped some river water.



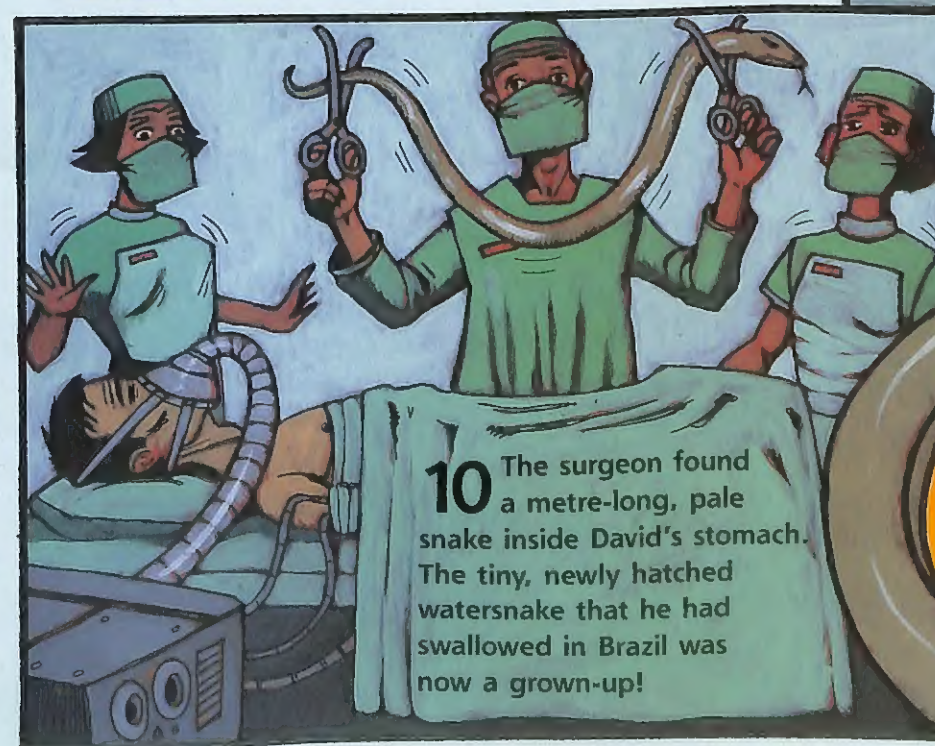
7 Although the guide ticked him off, the rest of the holiday passed happily and soon he was back home, showing off his photos.



8 Over the next weeks, David's appetite grew. He ate and ate but got thinner, not fatter!

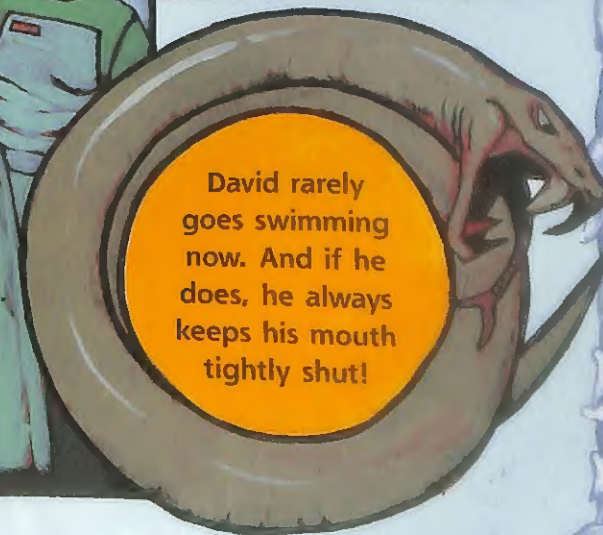


9 His worried parents insisted that he went to see the doctor, who immediately got him into hospital.



10 The surgeon found a metre-long, pale snake inside David's stomach. The tiny, newly hatched watersnake that he had swallowed in Brazil was now a grown-up!

David rarely goes swimming now. And if he does, he always keeps his mouth tightly shut!





GREEN CHILDREN OF WOOLPIT

Investigation: File 42
The Green Children of Woolpit
Date: about 1150AD
Place: Woolpit village, Suffolk, England
SpineChiller creates a file.

Weird Green Arrivals

One day, Woolpit farm workers were amazed to see a young boy and girl climbing from the wolf pits. They had green hair and green skin. Their eyes were also green and they were dressed in unusual green clothes. No one could understand the language they spoke, so they were taken to the local squire, Sir Richard de Calne, who took them in. They refused all food for so many days that it seemed they'd die of hunger. But when the cook offered the children some green beans, they ate them happily. For months they ate nothing but beans until they got used to bread. Gradually the boy and girl lost their green colour. When they'd learnt to speak English, they were asked who they were and where they had come from.



Evidence no: 42/1
Woolpit village today.

WOLF PIT TO WOOLPIT

In King Stephen's time, wolves still roamed the land and pits were often dug round villages to keep the wolves from the livestock. Woolpit village took its name from these pits, and is the setting for this strange tale. One version of the Green Children of Woolpit story, written by William of Newburgh, appeared in a 1618 book about Suffolk's history.

THE MYSTERY DEEPENS

The children said that they came from a twilit place called Saint Martin's land; where the sun never shone and everything was green. They had been watching their father's herds when they heard a great noise, which they followed into a tunnel. The next thing they remembered was standing, dazed, in the blinding sunlight of Woolpit!



Evidence no: 42/2
How the green children may have looked.

WHAT BECAME OF THE CHILDREN?

The boy died about a year later, but his sister lived on in Woolpit until she married a man from the nearby town of King's Lynn.

POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS

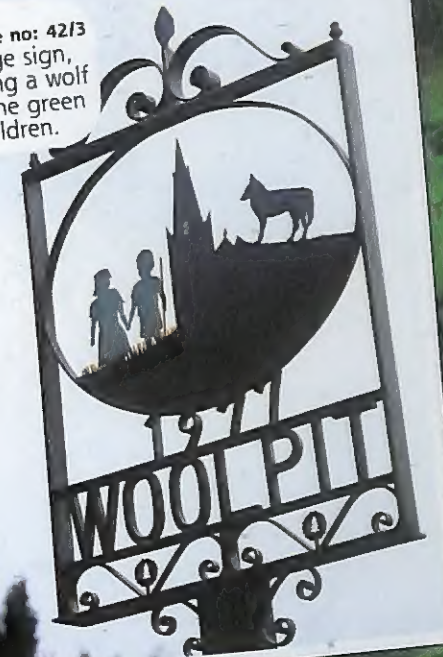
- A few miles from Woolpit is a village called Fornham St. Martin, which could be St. Martin's land. Further north is the dark and gloomy Thetford Forest. If the children had lived in the depths of this dense forest, it could explain their 'sunless' home.
- The children may have reached Woolpit through the underground tunnels of old flint mines in the area. This dark and scary journey must have taken some time and could explain their dazed, hungry state.
- The green children possibly spoke English with such a thick accent that Woolpit folk couldn't understand a word and thought that it must be a foreign language.
- An illness called green chlorosis – a type of anaemia – can turn the skin green. This symptom is made worse by a bad diet. The children's green skin slowly lost its colour after they began to eat a normal diet. Maybe they were suffering from this illness.
- Some people claim that the green children were the original Babes in the Wood of the fairy tale. Poisoned with arsenic by their wicked uncle, they were left in the forest to die. Arsenic poisoning can turn skin green.

Evidence no: 42/4
Woolpit church banner showing the green children.



Unexplained

Evidence no: 42/3
Village sign, showing a wolf and the green children.



CLASSIC

SERIAL



Chapter 1

The Portrait Painter

Retold from a story by Charles Dickens

I am a portrait painter and I live in London. One afternoon in May 1858, a gentleman and his wife were shown into my rooms. They told me that they had seen one of my portraits and said they would like to commission a picture of themselves and their children at their country house. I agreed and said that I would contact them in the autumn, to fix the date of my visit. They left me their card and departed. A little later, when I looked at the card, I realised that there was no address on it – the card simply stated their names, Mr and Mrs Kirkbeck. So, I put it away and thought no more about the matter.

In September, I set off for the north of England and found myself, one evening, at a dinner party in a house on the Yorkshire-Lincolnshire border.

Towards the end of the meal I thought I heard the name of 'Kirkbeck' being mentioned further down the table. I suddenly remembered the calling card and asked my neighbour if there was a family called Kirkbeck living nearby. He told me that there was and that they lived at the other end of Lincolnshire, at Alvingham. So, next morning I wrote to Mr Kirkbeck, saying that I believed he had visited me in May and commissioned portraits of his family. However he had not left his address, so if he still wanted me to do them, he should write to me care of the Post Office at York.

Mr Kirkbeck replied and we arranged for me to visit the family the next weekend, and to return to paint the portraits a few weeks later. To get to Alvingham I had to take the London-bound train and change at Retford Junction. It was a cold, foggy day when I boarded the train and I had a carriage to myself until Doncaster, when a tall, veiled lady, who was dressed in black, got in. I offered her my seat next to the door, which is usually considered to be the ladies' seat, but she politely refused, saying that she preferred to feel the breeze on her face. Once she had settled her clothes and thrown back her veil, I could see that the lady was only about twenty-two or

three, with auburn hair, dark eyebrows and large eyes that stood out against her pale skin.

She seemed happy to talk and I soon realised how lucky I was to have such a very charming companion with whom to while away the tedious journey. One thing puzzled me, though. She behaved as if she already knew me, or knew much about me, and several times referred to events in my life and places I had visited. The time flew by and when I got up to change trains at Retford, she offered her hand and said, "I expect we shall meet again."



I travelled on to Alvingham alone and found a carriage waiting for me. Mr Kirkbeck was due to arrive by the next train, so I was taken to his house, where the servants showed me to my room. When I had unpacked and changed, I went down to the drawing room. From the doorway I could make out the seated figure of a lady, dressed in black, warming a foot in front of the blazing fire. As I came in, she rose and stood in front of the fire. The lamps had not yet been lit and so I could not see her features until, as I walked into the middle of the room, the lady swivelled round and smiled at me, as if she had been expecting me. In an instant I recognised my travelling companion from earlier in the day.

"I told you we would meet again," she said gently.

I was so taken aback to see her standing there that I couldn't reply. When I left her, she was on the train bound for London and, as far as I knew, there was no other railway line, or other means of transport, that could have brought her to the house ahead of me.

When I finally found my tongue I said

that I wished I had taken the same form of transport as she had done.

"That would have been rather difficult," she answered softly. But before I had a chance to ask her what she meant, a servant came in carrying lighted lamps and informed me that the master had just arrived and would be down shortly.

The lady then picked up a book with engravings in it and was just asking me if I thought that one particular portrait looked like her, when my hosts swept in, apologising for being late. Mr Kirkbeck asked me to take Mrs Kirkbeck into dinner and I held back for a minute, to allow Mr Kirkbeck to lead the way with the lady in black. But Mrs Kirkbeck stepped ahead as if she hadn't understood my gesture and so she and I walked into the dining room first.

Mr and Mrs Kirkbeck sat at either end of the table, with the lady in black and myself between them. During dinner I conversed with my hosts, who were very interested in the subject of portrait painting.

I had noticed that they did not seem to be talking to the other lady, and had not particularly greeted her when they came in, neither had they introduced me to her.

Underlined words are explained in WORD POWER.



I therefore presumed that she must be the governess. It was only after dinner, when other members of the family, including a few of the Kirkbecks' children and their governess, Miss Hardwick, joined us in the drawing room, that I realised that the lady was not in fact what I thought she was.

At this stage of the evening she came up to me and returned to the subject of painting. She asked me if I thought I could paint her portrait from memory. I told her it would be difficult, and suggested that she could sit for me.

"No, that's quite impossible," she replied, firmly.

"Just once?" I asked. "Even once would be better than not at all."

"No, I'm afraid I cannot."

Then she said she was tired, shook my hand, wished me goodnight and slipped out of the room.

When I myself went to bed, I lay awake wondering about my mysterious travelling companion. I recalled that I hadn't seen her talk to anyone apart from myself all evening, not even to say goodnight. I remembered the way she avoided looking at me as she firmly insisted that she could not sit for me.

When I came down to breakfast the next morning she had already gone and, as no one mentioned her, I assumed that she was a relative of the Kirkbecks and that she must have left early to visit another member of the family nearby. The next morning, when a servant came into my room, I decided to question him about the visitor.

"Who was the lady who dined with us on Saturday night?" I asked.

"You mean Mrs Kirkbeck, sir?" he replied.

"No, I'm talking about the lady dressed in black who sat opposite me at the table," I explained.

"Perhaps you mean Miss Hardwick, the

governess, sir?" he replied again.

"No, it wasn't Miss Hardwick," I said patiently. "She joined us later."

"But there was no other lady, sir," the servant insisted.

I was now starting to feel less patient with the man's sluggish memory.

"Of course there was – she was the same lady who was sitting in front of the fire when I arrived. You must remember her!"

The servant stared at me, looking nonplussed. I could see that he thought I was ranting like a lunatic.

"I never saw any such lady, sir," he muttered, his eyes fixed firmly on the ground. The man then sped from the room before I could call him back.

Breakfast was rushed as I had to catch the early train to London and I only had time to make the arrangements with my hosts for my return visit. But when I did return three weeks later, I questioned Mr and Mrs Kirkbeck about the lady in black. They were both quite positive that there had only been three people at the dinner table that night and that they knew nobody who fitted the description I gave them.

WORD POWER

to commission – to place an order for something; to ask someone to do a task or duty.

calling card – a card showing a person's name, rather like a business card.

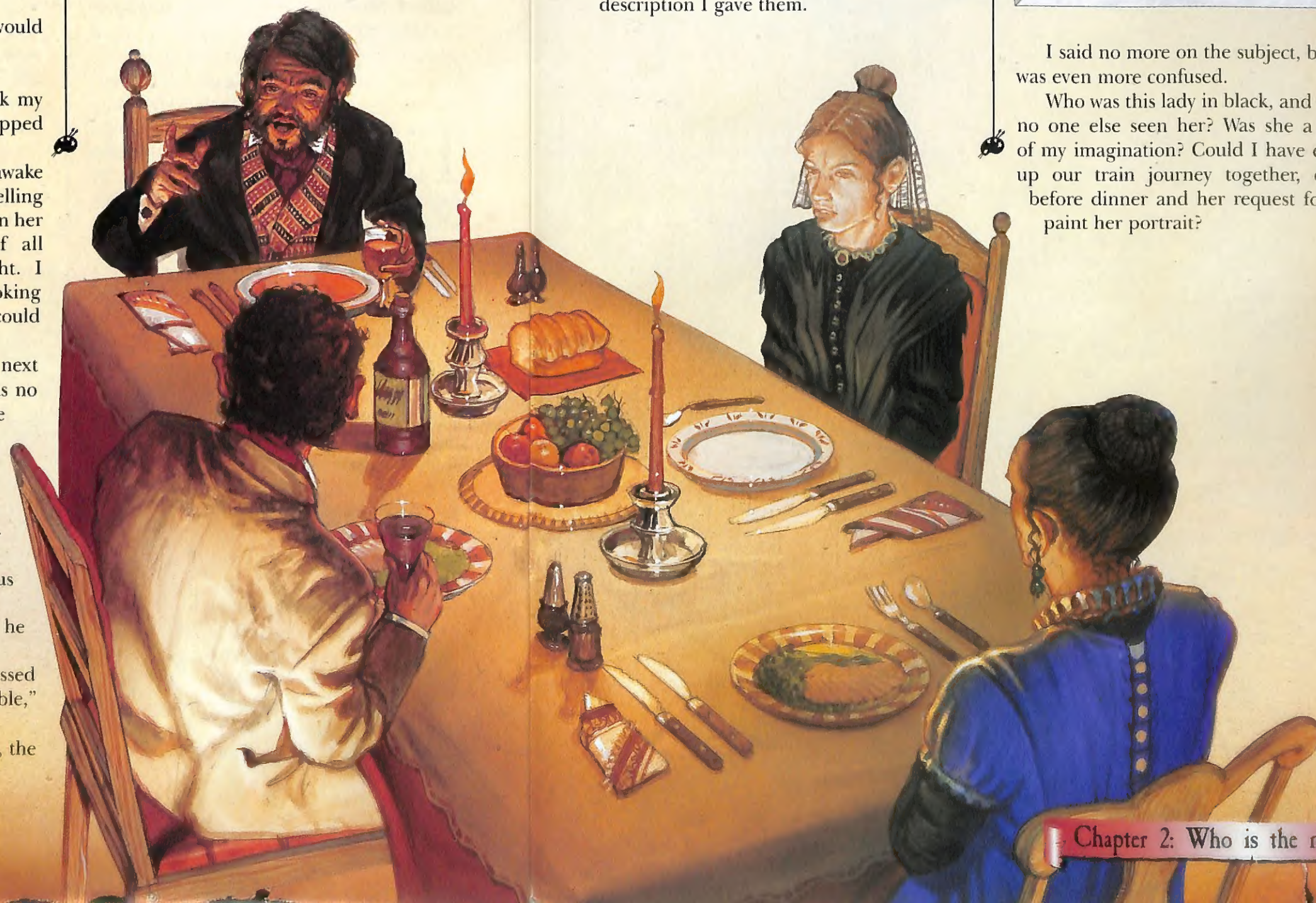
tedious – dull; boring.

nonplussed – confused; at a loss.

figment – invention; fantastic idea.

I said no more on the subject, but now I was even more confused.

Who was this lady in black, and why had no one else seen her? Was she a figment of my imagination? Could I have dreamed up our train journey together, our talk before dinner and her request for me to paint her portrait?



SWAMP PUZZLES

SWAMP TALK

The swamp monsters are talking to each other in their own language. Can you work out what each one is saying?
(Clue: The first five letters of the swamp monsters' alphabet are: swA B C D swE.)

Swif frswozswen wswatswer swis swicswed wswatswer, whswat swis frswozswen swink?

Swicswed swink!

Yswoswu sswurswe dswol!

A

B

C

			H			
P						
					G	
		O				

FASCINATING FACTS

Alligators live and breed in swamps. If their eggs are incubated at less than 30° centigrade, only females are born. If they are incubated at more than 33° centigrade, then all the newborn alligators are male!



FREAKY FACTS

Australian legends feature a swamp monster called a Bunyip. It leaps out of swamps to grab its victims, which it attracts by means of a mysterious, magnetic force!

SWAMP CREATURES

Hiding from the monsters are real creatures which you really would find in a swamp. Can you spot a turtle, a heron, a snake, a frog and a tiny snail?

			P		
		R			
C					
	I			E	

PONG 'N' GUNGE

After Pong, on the left, has taken a perfumed bath, Gunge, above, likes to throw stinky things at him to make him smell revolting again! Unscramble the letters of the four things near Pong's bath which he uses to scent the water and fit them into the grid – some letters have been filled in to help you. In Gunge's grid, write in the names of the four very whiffy things he throws at Pong. Then re-arrange the letters in the coloured squares of each grid to find the names of two of Gunge's favourite smells.



HECESE

SHEFIS

POWACT

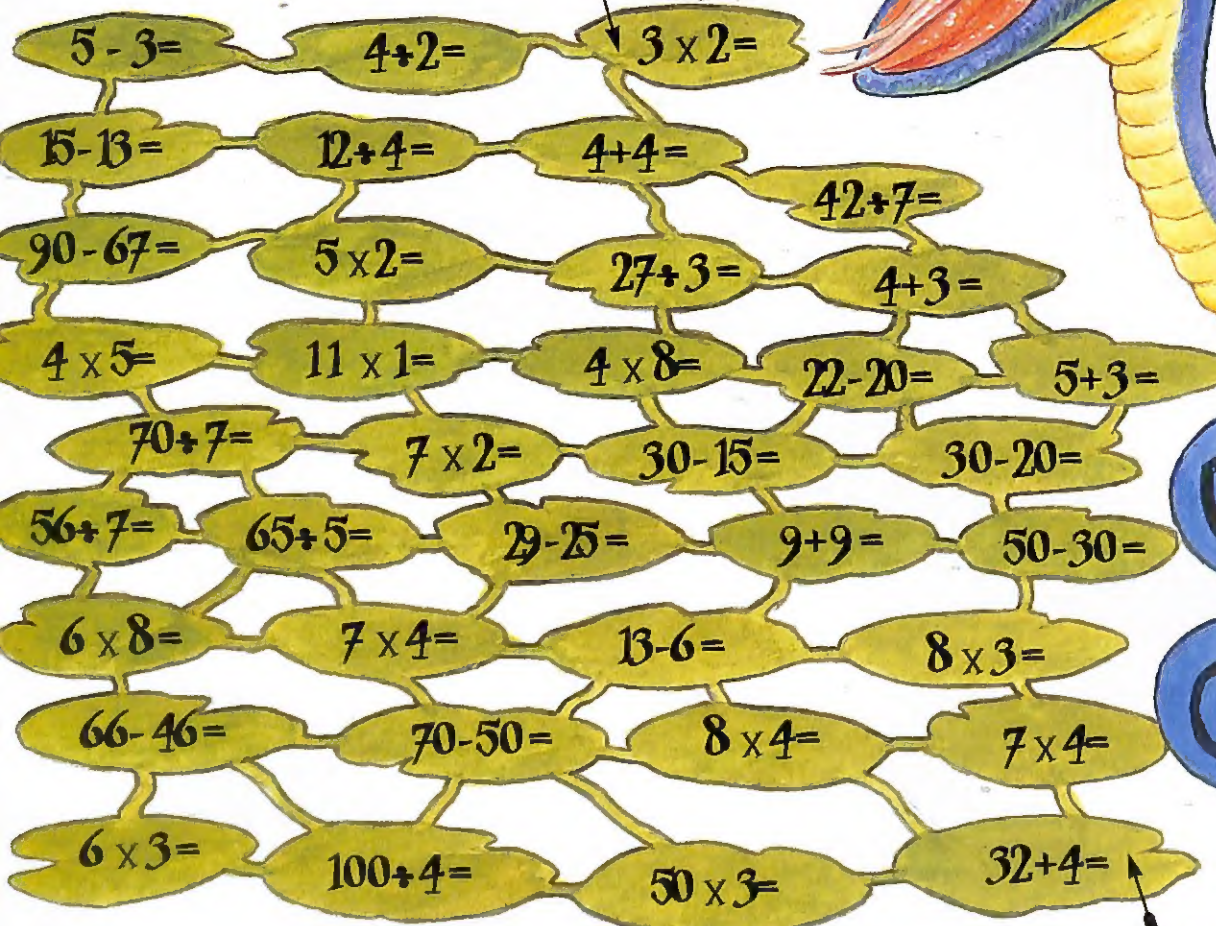
HICAG

GUTMENS

NUMBER SWAMP

There is only safe way through the swamp.
Work out the sums to find the next step –
the number should be close to and slightly
higher than the one before.

START



END

FUN FACT

The mudskipper is a very unusual fish which lives in the swamps and can actually climb trees! It stores water in its large gill chambers, allowing it to live out of water for long periods of time.

GIANT SNAKE

This giant snake is lurking in the swamp. The pattern on his skin is in segments which are in a sequence. Fill in the two big, blank segments with the correct pattern.



WHAT ARE GHOSTS?

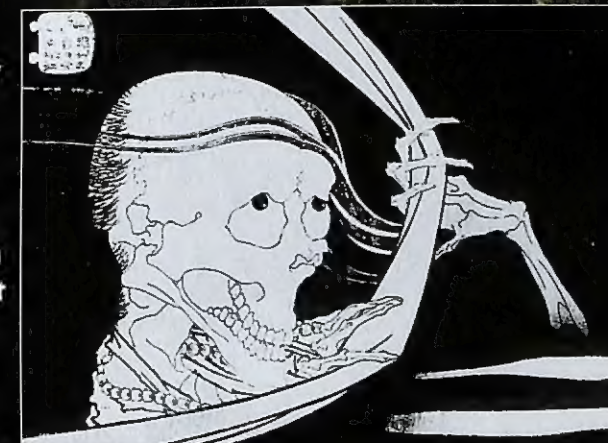
Many people believe that ghosts are spirits of the dead that have not passed over to the next world. Instead, they continue to appear in this one.

World spooks Ghosts show themselves in many different ways round the world. Phantoms, almost transparent apparitions of dead people, are common in Europe. In Africa, a ghost often inhabits a favoured object of the deceased.

In China you may be unlucky enough to meet a gruesome walking corpse, so it's a relief to learn that ghosts are mostly invisible in south-east Asia. Unfortunately they are huge and terrifying when they can be seen.

People round the world react differently to seeing ghosts. In Japan, ghosts are nearly always seen as very scary and many rituals are performed to keep them at peace. The same goes for some South American tribes, who cast spells to drive the spirits of the dead away.

GHOSTS



GHOSTLY SIGHTS
Many ghostly encounters seem to occur around a specific place, and often involve violent or tragic events leading to a death. Feelings of injustice may drive a ghost to return again and again. A well-known example is Anne Boleyn, the beheaded wife of Henry VIII, who is said to walk the ramparts of the

▲ **VINDICTIVE GHOST**
This Japanese woodcut shows a ghost that has come to wreak vengeance on its enemies.

▼ **PICTURE THAT!**
Ghostly apparitions can appear unexpectedly in photographs. Eastray church (left) and Prestbury churchyard were both empty when these pictures were taken.

Tower of London – her head tucked under her arm!
Haunted Britain It seems that Britain is crammed with haunted houses. It's probably not surprising that every old building has its own ghost when they have such gory histories. Ghosts have a mixed reputation, but not all of them are believed to be dangerous. Ghosts may help people. Some of the ways a ghost may reveal itself are shown over the page.



At a crisis It is often reported that a person dying far away will appear to a loved one. An airman killed over France in 1917, during World War I, was said to have appeared to his sister in Calcutta and a niece in England within 12 hours of his death.

Ghostly warnings Sometimes a ghost will appear to warn of life-threatening danger, such as a trip on a plane which later crashes.

Poltergeist This German word means 'noisy or rattling spirit'. These unseen ghosts are responsible for objects flying round the room, knocking or rattling noises and, in more alarming cases, fires and physical attacks.

Spooky feelings Perhaps the most common of all ghostly experiences is being overwhelmed by an eerie feeling. This is likely to be linked to a particular place and investigation may reveal that the spot was the scene of tragic events.



HOW TO GO GHOST HUNTING

- 1 Always take a friend with you. It's useful to have an independent observer to confirm what you've seen – and someone to hang on to!
- 2 Many ghost stories can be explained by everyday events – so remember, before you start, check for knocking pipes and creaking floorboards!
- 3 Sprinkle talcum powder or sugar on the floor to record strange footprints.
- 4 Take a photo, tape record noises and make a note of temperature changes. Write down every strange thing that you experience.
- 5 And finally... don't be frightened!

▲ OUT OF THIN AIR

European ghosts often appear as transparent apparitions. The ghost in this picture was seen by several people at Buntingford, Hertfordshire, in the 1930s.

▲ TIME TO DIE

In 1779, a ghost told Lord Lyttleton the time at which he would die. He put his clocks forward, but it didn't work – he died as predicted.

► FRIENDLY FREAKS

Can children see ghosts more easily than adults? In 1991, two-year-old Greg Sheldon Maxwell began to say "Old Nanna's here!" He was referring to the ghost of his great-grandmother who had recently died.

